



Research Notes

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Hispanic Listening to Public Radio

by Richard H. Madden¹

Question #1: How many Hispanics listen to public radio?

Answer #1: Probably not very many.

Question #2: Which stations do Hispanics listen to most?

Answer #2: Those owned and operated by Hispanics.

Question #3: What do other public stations offer Hispanics?

Answer #3: Not much.

These answers are probably the ones most often given by those inside and outside of public broadcasting.

The answers are wrong!

From a national perspective, public radio serves Hispanics in measurable, indeed sizeable proportions. The issue is not just whether Hispanics listen but to which stations they listen and why. This examination of public radio's Hispanic audience concludes that geographic location is the principal factor that determines Hispanic listening.

Arbitron assesses Hispanic listening in markets with the largest Hispanic populations. About 74% of U.S. Hispanics age 12+ live in these markets. A CPB-supported station is available to about 95% of these Hispanics. They have access to 45 CPB-supported stations. Hispanic listeners to these 45 stations in these 22 Arbitron controlled metro markets in 1988 and 1989 are the focus of this study.

And Hispanics listen!

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HOW MANY HISPANICS LISTEN TO PUBLIC RADIO?

Per the table to the right, over nine percent of public radio's cume audience in these 22 markets in the two year study period were Hispanic. While sizeable, it falls short of Hispanic population composition in these markets, which averaged 16.8%.

Hispanic Composition of Public Radio Audience

	<u>Population</u> (000)	<u>Cume</u> <u>Audience</u> (000)
Total 12+	54,227	3,588
Hispanics 12+	9,125	338
<u>Composition</u>	<u>16.8%</u>	<u>9.4%</u>

WHAT STATIONS DO HISPANICS LISTEN TO?

45 CPB-supported stations served listeners in markets controlled by Arbitron for Hispanic listening during both years of the study. Not surprisingly, Hispanic use of these stations varies. Fifteen of these 45 stations (33%) accounted for 72% of Hispanic listening to public radio in 1988 and 1989.

Stations With Largest Hispanic Cumes

<u>Station</u>	<u>Market</u>	<u>Hispanic</u> <u>Cume</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Total US</u> <u>Hispanic</u> <u>Audience</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Composition</u> <u>Station</u> <u>Cume</u>
WBGO-FM	NEW YORK	28,100	8.3	11.9
KSJV-FM	FRESNO	24,000	7.1	93.6
WNYC-FM	NEW YORK	22,850	6.8	6.2
KUSC-FM	LOS ANGELES	21,800	6.5	7.6
KPCC-FM	LOS ANGELES	18,300	5.4	17.6
KPFK-FM	LOS ANGELES	17,850	5.3	14.2
KLON-FM	LOS ANGELES	15,200	4.5	12.3
KUHF-FM	HOUSTON-GALVESTON	14,850	4.4	10.3
KPFA-FM	SAN FRANCISCO	14,200	4.2	14.7
KCRW-FM	LOS ANGELES	13,800	4.1	6.1
KPBS-FM	SAN DIEGO	11,850	3.5	14.3
WBAI-FM	NEW YORK	11,100	3.3	8.4
KQED-FM	SAN FRANCISCO	10,650	3.2	4.7
KXCR-FM	EL PASO	9,650	2.9	55.0
KPFT-FM	HOUSTON-GALVESTON	9,600	2.8	28.2
Remaining 30 Stations		94,100	27.8	6.9
<u>TOTAL</u>		<u>337,901</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>9.4</u>

Per the above table, WBGO-FM had a weekly Hispanic cume of 28,100. Its Hispanic cume audience was 8.3% of public radio's national cume audience with Hispanics constituting 11.9% of the station's overall audience.

HOW LONG DO HISPANICS LISTEN?

Major market stations typically have lower time spent listening (TSL) because of the availability of so many stations competing for

listeners' time. Stations in markets controlled for Hispanic listening are also located in major markets. So the public radio TSL is lower than the nationwide average per the following table.

The table also shows that Hispanic TSL to public radio is virtually the same as other listeners' TSL. This may initially appear contrary to other studies of Hispanic listening to all radio. These other studies suggest that Hispanics listen to radio longer than non-Hispanics. What the finding of this study more likely suggests is that the Hispanic public radio audience listens to public radio for about the same amount of time per week as non-Hispanic listeners. This is probably caused by public radio's program appeal.

Hispanic Time Spent Listening

	<u>1988/1989</u> <u>Time Spent</u> <u>Listening</u>
All Public Radio	
Listeners Nationwide:	7.5 hours
Public Stations Controlled for Hispanic Listening --	
Hispanic Listeners:	6.6 hours
Other Listeners:	6.8 hours

WHY DO HISPANICS LISTEN TO THESE STATIONS?

Licensee control, language, appeal, budget, and geographic location are among the suggested answers.

LICENSEE CONTROL:

The table to the right is a list of Hispanic owned and controlled stations and their Hispanic audiences. To read: KSJV-FM, Fresno has an Hispanic cume of 24,000. Fresno's Hispanic population represents 7.1% of the total U.S. Hispanic audience. The Hispanic population in Fresno represents 1.7% of the total U.S. Hispanic population.

Hispanic Listening to Hispanic Controlled Stations

<u>Station</u>	<u>Market</u>	<u>Hispanic</u> <u>Cume</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Total US</u> <u>Hispanic</u> <u>Audience</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Total US</u> <u>Hispanic</u> <u>Population</u>
KSJV-FM	FRESNO	24,000	7.1	1.7
KXCR-FM	EL PASO	9,650	2.9	3.2
KBBF-FM	SAN FRANCISCO	6,950	2.1	6.9
KDNA-FM	YAKIMA WA	5,000	1.5	0.2
<u>TOTAL</u>		<u>45,600</u>	<u>13.5</u>	<u>12.0</u>

This study does not include three other Hispanic owned and controlled CPB-supported stations.

Arbitron added Denver (KUVU FM) to the list of markets controlled by Arbitron for Hispanic listening in 1990 after the 1988-1989 period covered by the study.

- . Arbitron does not survey in Puerto Rico. So Hato Rey (WIPR FM) is not included.
- . Salinas (KHDC FM) had no Radio Research Consortium subscriber during the study years.

In summary, the four Hispanic controlled stations included in this study explain about 14% of U.S. Hispanic public radio listening. KSJV FM's audience accounted for half that amount. The markets served by these stations include 12% of the U.S. Hispanic population age 12+. Since 85% of Hispanic listening is to non-Hispanic controlled stations, it appears that Hispanic control is not a dominant factor in determining existing Hispanic listening.

This should not be surprising since it is unlikely that any radio listener would choose a station based on its ownership or that the licensee's race or ethnicity would compel targeting to a like audience. Licensees determine which audiences they wish to serve and listeners determine whether stations are successful in providing appealing programming.

LANGUAGE

A predominantly Spanish language station, KSJV-FM, Fresno, is among the stations with larger Hispanic audiences.

And other stations (KPBS-FM, San Diego; KPFK-FM, Los Angeles; KPFT-FM and KUHF-FM, Houston-Galveston; WBAI-FM, New York) include some Spanish language programming in their overall formats. They show significant Hispanic audiences as well.

In fact, most of the 45 stations showing Hispanic listening have English-only or predominantly English-only formats.

Spanish language stations meet a need. Indeed, Hispanics make up the largest proportion of audiences for such stations. Still, public radio Spanish language programming does not currently appear to be a dominant factor in generating public radio Hispanic listeners nationally.

APPEAL

The appeals of the 15 stations with larger Hispanic listenership listed above are as diverse as the public radio system. The table on the next page lists how each of these stations described their formats during the period of the study:

Formats of Stations with Larger Hispanic Audiences

<u>Station</u>	<u>Market</u>	<u>Format</u>
WBGO-FM	NEW YORK	Jazz/News & Information
KSJV-FM	FRESNO	Bilingual (Spanish/English) Folk
WNYC-FM	NEW YORK	Classical and Contemporary Concert Music
KUSC-FM	LOS ANGELES	Classical Music
KPCC-FM	LOS ANGELES	Big Band/News and Information
KPFK-FM	LOS ANGELES	Eclectic
KLON-FM	LOS ANGELES	Jazz News-Information
KUHF-FM	HOUSTON-GALVESTON	Classical/News
KPFA-FM	SAN FRANCISCO	Eclectic
KCRW-FM	LOS ANGELES	Eclectic
KPBS-FM	SAN DIEGO	Fine Arts and News
WBAI-FM	NEW YORK	News and Information/Music/Drama
KQED-FM	SAN FRANCISCO	News and Information
KXCR-FM	EL PASO	Contemporary Jazz/Rhythm and Blues/Bilingual News and Public Affairs
KPFT-FM	HOUSTON-GALVESTON	Eclectic

Using their own definitions, each station appeals to a somewhat different, perhaps overlapping audience.

The majority of the audience of three Spanish language stations (KBBF-FM, KDNA-FM, and KSJV-FM) is Hispanic. Except for KSJV-FM, the overall Hispanic audience is relatively low.

The majority of the audience for two other stations is also Hispanic. One is KXCR-FM, El Paso, that describes its format as Contemporary Jazz/Rhythm and Blues/Bilingual News and Public Affairs. As noted, it has one of the larger Hispanic audiences. The other is KETR-FM, Dallas-Ft. Worth that describes its format during the study as Contemporary/News/Bluegrass/Classical.

Spanish language programming should and does appeal to an Hispanic audience. Still, program formats grounded in a variety of other appeals also deliver large, Hispanic audiences. So, no single appeal delivers Hispanic listeners.

BUDGET

Per the table on the following page, the 45 study stations enjoyed average annual incomes (NFFS, CSGs and NPPAGs) that were 36% greater than the typical CPB-supported station. This is likely due to the location of stations in the nation's largest markets.

Among the 15 stations with larger Hispanic audiences are stations with budgets that were below the average budget for the 45 stations. And some of the 45 stations with budgets above the average had very small Hispanic audiences. Indeed, a statistical

analysis of station budgets and Hispanic cume audiences confirms there is no correlation between budget and Hispanic audience.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

The 45 CPB-supported stations that are the focus of this study are located in the 22 metro markets that Arbitron controls for Hispanic listening. CPB-supported stations were in place in both 1988 and 1989.

The table to the right compares the per market Hispanic cume audience 12+ with the per market Hispanic population 12+. To read, 2.3 million Hispanics or 25% of the Hispanic population age 12+ lived in the Los Angeles metro area during 1988 and 1989. Of this population, 88,050 Hispanics or 26% of public radio's national Hispanic cume audience also lived in Los Angeles.

Stations by Income

<u>1988/1989</u>	<u>Average Income</u>
System wide	\$879,000
45 Stations in Study	\$1,193,000
15 Stations w/Larger Hisp. Cumes	\$1,797,000
30 Stations w/Smaller Hisp. Cumes	\$889,000

Per Market Comparison of Hispanic Audience and Population

<u>Market</u>	<u>Hispanic Cume Audience</u>	<u>Percent Total US Hispanic Audience</u>	<u>Hispanic Population 12+</u>	<u>Percent Total US Hispanic Population</u>
LOS ANGELES	88,050	26.1	2,311,300	25.3
NEW YORK	77,000	22.8	1,791,250	19.6
MIAMI-FT. LAUDERDALE-HOLLYWOOD	6,050	1.8	716,850	7.9
SAN FRANCISCO	36,500	10.8	629,150	6.9
CHICAGO	7,000	2.1	525,600	5.8
SAN ANTONIO	6,000	1.8	493,500	5.4
HOUSTON-GALVESTON	24,450	7.2	484,450	5.3
SAN DIEGO	11,850	3.5	298,450	3.3
EL PASO	17,300	5.1	292,250	3.2
DALLAS-FT. WORTH	8,500	2.5	278,350	3.1
PHOENIX	4,150	1.2	209,150	2.3
RIVERSIDE-SAN BERNARDINO	2,750	.8	186,850	2.0
ALBUQUERQUE	2,900	.9	164,050	1.8
FRESNO	25,000	7.4	150,800	1.7
AUSTIN	6,150	1.8	117,750	1.3
SACRAMENTO	4,651	1.4	113,700	1.2
TUCSON	3,400	1.0	109,750	1.2
BAKERSFIELD	0	.0	89,600	1.0
STOCKTOM	550	.2	74,650	.8
MODESTO	300	.1	40,950	.4
SANTA BARBARA	350	.1	27,200	.3
YAKIMA WA	5,000	1.5	19,400	.2
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>337,901</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>9,125,000</u>	<u>100.0</u>

A strong correlation exists between the Hispanic cumulative audience and the Hispanic population. Hispanic population is a factor in determining the number of Hispanics listening to public radio.

No other factor appears to predict Hispanic audience. So, station geographic location appears to be the dominant factor in determining Hispanic listenership to public radio.

CONCLUSIONS

What does this information tell stations, producers, distributors, and funders as they set about to achieve the system goal of serving Hispanics?

The distinct message is that to serve more Hispanics, public stations that include Hispanics in their target audience must be located in markets where the most Hispanics live.

The three top U.S. Hispanic population centers (Los Angeles, New York, and Miami), account for over 50% of the U.S. Hispanics 12+. In these three cities, Hispanics are 18.8% of the population but only 8.6% of public radio's Hispanic audience. Accordingly, directed efforts in these cities are apt to be more effective than other strategies at measurably increasing the Hispanic audience.

Stations in these three cities, and other stations with larger concentrations of Hispanics in their audiences, should be aware of the opportunity and challenge of serving this audience. Their first question should be whether their existing, sizeable Hispanic audience is a result of happenstance or of a directed effort. Directed programming, promotion, development, marketing, and personnel strategies that reflect the diversity of listenership are in order for these stations.

These communities could also establish new stations with a primary mission of serving an Hispanic audience. Or existing stations could rework their formats. Regardless of the format or language of that format, these alternatives are not likely in the foreseeable future. This is because of the lack of available frequencies and the absence of local financial commitment to establish such stations. Related issues are the increasing commercial competition for Hispanic listeners and station economic viability.

A national solution is equally problematic per the following.

Hispanic listeners reflect different cultural subgroups, with different cities having different Hispanic majorities, for example, Cuban, Puerto Rican and Mexican. Because of immigration patterns over the past decade, even these are rapidly changing. For instance in New York, the Dominican, Salvadoran and Central and South American communities are growing. Since no monolithic national Hispanic population exists, no single local or national program schedule, commercial or noncommercial, is likely to appeal to all Hispanics.

Indeed, Broadcasting magazine's December 10, 1990 report on Hispanic broadcasting noted that Spanish commercial radio now includes at least 10 distinct formats. The evidence suggested by this study of Hispanic listening to public radio appears to yield similar results. Hispanic listening to classics, jazz, news and information, eclectic, and Hispanic formatted stations varies market-to-market. So, no single national format is likely to appeal to Hispanics.

Hispanic listeners, like all listeners, listen to formats not individual programs. Accordingly, no single national program is likely to appeal to the stations with larger Hispanic audiences. And, the aggregate funding is not available now to meet the costs for creating such a single highly targeted, discrete national program service.

For these reasons, the creation of an economically viable national program service targeted solely, or even primarily, to Hispanics is also not likely at this time.

Finally, most public radio Hispanic listeners are listening to monolingual-English programming. Any strategy, no matter how successful, for increasing the Hispanic audience that focuses on existing stations and their audiences will, almost by definition, not serve the monolingual-Spanish speaking audience. The resulting policy question is whether service to bilingual or monolingual-English speaking Hispanics represents sufficient performance on the system's responsibility to serve the Hispanic audience.

It is an important question since, from a national perspective, public radio has proven that it is able to serve many Hispanics in measurable, indeed sizeable proportions.